

## **II Corinthians 1-7 Paul's Defense of Himself His Fellow Workers of the Faith, & His Ministry**

**Who Is Adequate for These Things? We Are.....Here's Why**

**Proof #1 We Are Adequate Because We Do Not Peddle The Word of God 2:17-3:3**

**Proof #2 We Are Adequate Because We Are Ministers of a New Covenant 3:4-3:18**

**Proof #3 We Are Adequate Because We Have A Clear Conscience Before Man & God (4:1-4:12)**

**Proof #4 We Are Adequate Because We Have A Home Which Is Eternal (4:13-5:11)**

**Vs. 16b** *"who is adequate for these things?"*

- Who is adequate for what things?
  - Who is adequate to be a sweet fragrance for Christ
  - Who is adequate to be to be triumphant in Christ?
  - Who is adequate to be used by God to spread the knowledge of Himself everywhere.

### **Proof #2 We Are Adequate Because God Has Made Us Ministers of a New Covenant**

#### **I. Vs 4-6 The New Covenant Gives Life Whereas the Old Covenant Was Limited**

- Vs. 4-5 *"And such confidence we have through Christ toward God."*
  - Paul just explained why he **DIDN'T** need letters
  - He spoke boldly that believers are living letters of Christ.

#### **Paul Rejects Man-Made Letters That Prove Adequacy Because His Adequacy Comes From God's Credentials.**

- Asking for letters was a standard practice of the time.
- *"Through Christ toward God."* NIV *".....before God."*
  - Paul clearly recognizes His authority is found in Christ.
  - We have no authority to stand before a Holy God except that we are cloaked in the shed blood of Jesus
  - **II Cor. 5:21** Jesus took on our sin & in exchnage we received his righteousness.
  - We have been granted his "right-standing" before God the Father.
  - When we stand before God the Father Jesus says "Oh, they're with me....."

**Illustration:** Robb Case media pass- special access.

- Vs. 6 *".....God also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."*
- Remember that Paul's opponents were Judaizers. At some level they were likely still promoting the Law.
- **Jeremiah 31:31** says that God promised a New Covenant to Israel.
- Old Covenant would no longer be necessary. Requirements satisfied & New Covenant established.
- Jesus did not circumvent the Law's requirement for atonement. He fulfilled it.

#### **Paul Subtly Shifts Concept of "Letter" to Reveal That The Letter Kills But The Spirit Gives Life.**

- Vs 1 he is referring to **written letters of correspondence**. We might write a letter of recommendation.
- Vs. 3 term letter begins to refer to the engravings of the **Mosaic stone tablets**.
- Vs. 6 he begins to use the term "letter" synonymous with **The Law or the Old Covenant**.
- Is Paul saying that God's Law actually kills people? Does obeying the Law result in literal death?
- Paul is revealing that The Law has no power to save us.
- The Law at best can only reveal our sin & point us to our need for a Savior. The Law reveals our death.
- **Genesis 2:17** *"...in your dying you will die."*

## **II. Vs 7-11 The Glory of the Old Covenant Cannot Compare to the Glory of The New Covenant**

- Vs. 7-8 ***"If stone tablets which cannot save were honored & revered, then the Spirit who saves and gives life should certainly be more than worthy of such honor & reverence."***
- **Exodus 34:29-35** Moses glowing when he came down Mountain.
- We understand that Moses was simply reflecting the Glory of God after time w/ Him
- This was not personal radiance by Moses or from Moses
- Paul says that this was fading and temporary at best. It was very glorious, but only temporary.

**Illustration:** Moon only reflects the radiance of the Sun. It is no source of light itself.  
Moses' face was only reflecting glory of God.

## **3 Sets of Contrasts That Describe the Difference Between The Glory of the Old & New Covenant**

### **1. Contrast of Condemnation & Righteousness Vs. 9**

- Vs. 9 ***"For the ministry of condemnation has glory, how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory."***
- Some translations say **"excel in glory"**, or **"overflow with glory"**
- The Law is a ministry of condemnation. The Spirit is a ministry of righteousness.
- The Law is only glorious in so far as it points out our sin.
- The Law reminds us that our bent is not naturally toward the things of God.

The Law **REVEALS** – The Spirit **REPAIRS**

### **2. Contrast of What Used to Have Glory with What Now Has Glory Vs. 10**

- The Law of Moses & the Jewish traditions had glory because they pointed to Jesus
- After Jesus fulfilled The Prophetic requirements of the Old Covenant He Became the Glory of God
- **John 5:44-46** Jesus reminds his Jewish audience he is the one foretold.
- Remember Paul formerly strictest advocate for Mosaic covenant.
- To glorify anything other than Levitical Law was pure blasphemy to Paul
- Then Jesus got Paul "Saul, why do you persecute me?" Jesus' glory surpassed the Law in Paul's life
- Vs. 10 Paul says what used to have glory no longer has glory because it has been surpassed.

### **3. Contrast of Fading Glory & Permanent Glory Vs.11**

- Vs. 7 Paul noted that even the glory that shown on Moses' face ultimately faded.
- How can glory that is temporary & fades ever be better greater than glory that never fades?

Remember That These Contrasts Are Characterizations of the Old & New Covenants  
Paul Is Reminding That He Is Adequate Because He is a Minister of the New Covenant  
The False Teachers Were Promoting Faith in A LAW that:

**Has No Power to Save  
It's Glory Has Been Surpassed by Jesus  
On Its Best Day It Was Still Fading & Temporary**

### **III. Paul Celebrates The Hope He Has In Jesus – Explains His Boldness and Adequacy 12-18**

**Vs. 12-18** *“Having therefor such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not as Moses who used to put a veil over his face.....”*

**What Hope Is Paul Referring To?** Everything he just described about the New Covenant.

**He has a hope In the Spirit Who Gives Life**

**He has a hope In the Eternal Permanency of the New Covenant**

**He has a hope In The Glory of the New Covenant**

**He has a hope In The Grace & Righteousness of the New Covenant**

#### **Paul Now Continues With Very Interesting Interplay of the Terms “Veil & Spirit”**

**Vs. 13** *“....we are not like Moses who put a veil over his face.....”*

- This is a physical veil. It's a covering to prevent Israel from seeing Moses' face.
- Passage in Exodus simply tells us that Israelites were scared & confused about Moses glorious face
- Paul implies Israel might have placed priority on glow & not on God.
- Consequently, Moses had to hide his face due to the **hardened hearts**.

**Vs. 14-16 Paul Repurposes Imagery of a Veil to A Spiritual Meaning – Synonymous w/ Spiritual Blindness**

- Those who fail to recognize Jesus as Messiah have veiled hearts
- Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees whose heart was veiled when he read the Law
- Paul knew the Old Testament scriptures inside & out but his heart was veiled.
- The same reason Israel did not understand Moses glowing face is same reason many don't understand Jesus.

**Veil Is ONLY Removed In Christ Jesus**

- **Vs. 14** *“remains **unlifted**, but **removed** in Christ”*
- **Vs. 15** *“veil **lies** over their hearts”*
- **Vs. 16** *“when a man turns to the Lord veil is **removed**”*
- **Vs. 18** *“**unveiled** faces...or unveiled hearts can see the glory of the Lord.....”*

#### **Vs. 17-18 Last 2 Verses Are A Little Interesting & Have Been Debated About Their Meaning**

• **Vs. 17** *“**Lord is Spirit, Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**”*

**1. Lord is Spirit = Specifically Jesus (Vs. 14)**

- Paul needs to make clear that he is referring to Jesus. Not Just Yehweh
- Paul used to be a strong proponent for Yehweh. He is purposefully make a distinction w/ Jesus.

**2. Liberty refers to the freedom from the Law.**

- Yes, free from penalty of sin. This context reveals freedom from strictly adhering to Law
- When you understand the “spirit” of the law, you have freedom & liberty because you understand what it exists to do. It cannot be perfectly obeyed, but points us to Jesus.
- Romans 7:7-11, Romans 8:2-6

**Vs. 18 Since Our Hearts Are No Longer Veiled We See Jesus As a Mirror Image Of The Glory of God**

- Israel DID NOT understand that Moses' face was reflection of God's glory
- They either wanted to worship Moses, or be afraid & confused about the phenomenon.
- In Christ Jesus, we see his image or his face as a mirror image of the Glory of God

**John 14 Philip asked Jesus to see the Father.** *“If you've seen me then you have seen the Father....”*

**Hebrews 1:3** *“The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.....”*

### **Application:**

#### **1. Similar to last week, our adequacy comes from God.**

- We can have a confidence to stand and speak boldly because God has equipped us.
- Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would give us the words to say.
- To the disciples he promised that when they were before kings, rulers, and judges he would equip them.

#### **2. Activities we practice today are NOT more glorious than Jesus Himself.**

- Just like the Old Testament Law pointed to Jesus, so should our activities.
- Baptism, communion, breaking bread together, and even other fellowship activities.
- Jesus referred to communion in the upper room as a sign of the New Covenant
- The practice was not to be worshipped, rather the one who it points to.

#### **3. We should have a proper gratitude for the Veil that has been removed from our hearts**

- \* Our recognition of Jesus as Messiah is only possibly by God's grace.
- Many people can read the Bible from cover to cover without any personal revelation of Jesus
- Fortunately for us, God has removed the veil from our hearts. He has granted us understanding.
- **Ephesians 2:8** ***"For it is by grace that we have been saved, through faith. This is not of our own doing, but a gift from God."***